Willkie Special Bears Presidential Challenger on 7,200-Mile Tour of West

Mr. Willkie formally opened his campaign speaking tour at Coffeyville, Kans., where he once taught history in the high school. Here he is shown posed to speak.
—A. P. Wirephoto.

Mr. and Mrs. Wendell L. Willkie waving to crowds from the observation platform of their Pullman private car Pioneer. The special train of 12 cars will make a 7,200-mile trip through 18 States with numerous speeches scheduled from the observation platform of the Pioneer.

A large crowd was on hand to welcome Mr. Willkie when the Republican candidate for president arrived in Chicago, the first major stop of his campaign tour of the West. Here he is shaking hands with well-wishers.
—A. P. Wirephoto.

On a hard floor in his home in Rushville, Ind., with a large-scale map of the United States in front of him, Wendell L. Willkie outlined his present speaking tour to Harold J. Gallagher, whose job it was to route the trip.
—A. P. Wirephoto.

Voters View Candidate at Close Range

Look Him Over as He Speaks From Rear Platform

By J. A. O'Leary.

ABOARD THE WILLKIE SPECIAL IN CALIFORNIA, Sept. 21.—Running for President of the United States today is like going out after a job to direct the affairs of one of the biggest going concerns in the world.

It has 130,000,000 stockholders, of whom about 60,000,000 are eligible by age and other qualification to help pick the head man. And these voting members are spread out over thousands of miles in communities with varying local problems, from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from the Canadian border to the Gulf of Mexico.

In the past there have been two generally accepted methods of applying for this important and highly-coveted job. One was to go out and show yourself to the voting directors. The other was to sit on your front porch and let the directors send delegations to look you over.

The advent of radio gave the front-porch style of campaign a potent new asset—provided the voting directors all know you, and merely want to hear you tell how you expect to run the job.

Wendell L. Willkie, the outspoken and vigorous new leader of the Republicans, decided to get down from his front porch, let the voters look him over, size him up at close range and listen to why he thinks they need a new head man.

All this is by way of introduction to the story of the Willkie special, which today is carrying the challenger north along the Pacific Coast on the second leg of a 7,200-mile journey among the voters of the West.

With the trip only half over, Mr. Willkie has made it clear that he is after the job in earnest, and that he will keep going until November 5 to lay his application in person before all sections of the country.

Ridicules 'Chicago Draft.'

To date President Roosevelt has done virtually no campaigning himself, outside of his labor speech to the Teamsters Union, but his running mate, Henry Wallace, is out on the stump. With the Democrats taking the position that the President was drafted for a third-term nomination, and with national defense plans claiming his attention in Washington, Mr. Roosevelt has shown no indication that he will respond to Mr. Willkie's challenge to come out and debate the issues.

Since the Willkie special left Chicago 10 days ago, the Republican nominee has hammered away at the President's refusal to debate, has ridiculed the "Chicago draft" claim and at every cross-roads has sounded a warning against the danger he sees for democracy if the third-term tradition is broken.

Wise Course.

If the President adheres to his present policy of letting other administration officials answer Mr. Willkie while he keeps busy with national defense, the battle of 1940 will stand out as a study in contrasts, entirely aside from the history-making test of whether the third-term tradition can be broken.

There are several reasons why Mr. Willkie was wise to choose the old-fashioned course of a swing around the country.

1. He is a newcomer in the field of politics and must let the people see as well as hear him. 2. His personal magnetism and forceful style require that he be seen as well as heard. 3. Being a newcomer, it is desirable that he give the local party workers in each State a chance to meet him and pass on to them the vim and vigor he has injected into the Republican cause after eight years of partial eclipse.

The Willkie special—a 12-car Pullman—is one of the largest campaign trains that has ever rolled over the political trails.

Used by Dewey.

Its central attraction is the historic observation car, the Pioneer, which, strangely enough, has served in the past as the traveling home of Mr. Roosevelt. Twelve years ago it carried former Gov. Alfred E. Smith of New York on his unsuccessful campaign against Herbert Hoover. More recently it was used by New York's district attorney, Thomas E. Dewey, who lost the Republican nomination to Mr. Willkie, but is now supporting him whole-heartedly in his fight for election.

Its wide rear platform makes a better stage on which to present the political drama than more modern trains. It contains five bedrooms and separate dining facilities. One bedroom has been converted into a sound-recording chamber for the loud-speakers that carry the speaches of the candidate to the crowds that line the tracks at every stop.

Accompanying Mr. Willkie on his Western swing are Mrs. Willkie; their 21-year-old son, Philip, and the candidate's broad-shouldered brother, Edward Willkie, who was once an athlete at the United States Naval Academy and American Olympic star.

A contingent of 46 news writers—one of the largest groups to accompany a candidate on an extended tour—fill several coaches.

Shower Baths.

In the baggage car, up front, five temporary dark rooms have been installed to facilitate development of pictures by the corps of photographers.

A barber, Vincent Gengarenelly, was brought along from New York. Shower baths also were included in the equipment of the train.

A lounge car was converted into a working press room, in which the steady clatter of typewriters resounds throughout the day and evening.

There is also the customary personal staff of candidate and employes of the National Committee—about 30 in all—including secretaries, stenographers and research experts, who have brought with them file cabinets of reference material and equipment for getting out speeches.

104 Passengers.

In addition to the newspapermen, there are telegraph company representatives to arrange for the sending of news dispatches wherever the train stops. The radio networks and some of the weekly news magazines also are represented.

In all, there are 104 passengers making the entire trip. The Republican organization, of course, pays only the expenses of the candidate's official entourage of 30, which, one official estimated is not likely to exceed $12,000. In addition to the railroad travel, the trip includes several overnight hotel stops.

But, taken as a whole, the Western tour will enable Mr. Willkie to speak directly to and be seen by many thousands of voters for about the cost of one Nation-wide evening radio broadcast. Of course, some of his speeches will be on the networks, too, as the campaign progresses, and will enable him to reach much greater unseen audiences. But the appeal he makes in personal appearances will continue to be an important factor throughout his campaign.

Patriotic Strains.

Loudspeaker equipment on the rear platform of a campaign train is not new, but an added attraction on the Willkie Special is the installation of amplifiers in the press car. It brings to the correspondents the brief platform talks, when the train does not stop long enough to permit the newsmen to get off, run to the end of the long train and back. At these 10-minute stops the train begins to move as the candidate reaches his closing line.

Then from the loudspeaker floats the patriotic strains of "God Bless America" as the train pulls away. It fits in with the main issue Mr. Willkie has raised on this trip—the preservation of democracy and how it would be endangered by a third term.

Near the candidate's car is a lounge car for the political leaders of the 18 States through which the train will pass before the Western tour ends, back in Chicago, September 27. As the train crosses a border one group gets off and another gets on. Usually these temporary travelers include the Republican candidates for Governor and for Congress.

Local Aspirants.

Between stops Mr. Willkie spends part of his time meeting these local candidates and exchanging information on political conditions in the State.

These visitations have long been a part of the ritual of a national campaign. It works to mutual advantage. At the next stop the local aspirants for public office urge the home folks to support "Wendell L. Willkie, whom I introduce to you as the next President of the United States." And the candidate always responds by appealing to his audience to "send Bill So-and-So to Congress to work with me next January."

Mr. Willkie saves part of the time between towns sketching in his mind an outline of what he will say at the next stop, but seldom does he write it out. He dislikes reading prepared manuscript, because he is at his best when he can look down into the faces in the crowd and talk to them like the master salesman he has shown himself to be.

He may have been an amateur when he jumped in and captured the Republican nomination from veteran campaigners at Philadelphia in June, but he had a basic understanding of human nature and he is performing like an expert now that the campaign is on.

Knows Their Problems.

He has driven home to the people of the West, where the Republicans used to be strong and hope to be again, that he is one of them,. a Hoosier from Indiana, who taught school in Kansas, harvested crops, worked in the beet fields of Colorado and picked fruit in California.

"You are the kind of people I grew up with," he tells the West. "I know your problems."

"I wanted to see you, and I want you to look me over," is another of his familiar greetings. "And if the impression of you is as good as my impression of you, everything is jake."

Although Wendell Willkie was a business executive in New York when he became a national figure, he had been in the metropolis for only 10 years. He grew up in Indiana and started his career as a lawyer in Ohio.

It is characteristic of him that he would carry his Western tour even down into Texas, which has gone Republican only once in nearly 70 years—in 1928. His chances of carrying it are not great, but he has in that State, as in nearly all others, that unknown factor—the independent Willkie enthusiasts—and he is overlooking no opportunity to encourage them on.

Mr. Willkie's mental alertness on a platform had much to do with his sudden rise on the political horizon, and it adds spice to his campaign.

When a delegation met his train in New Mexico and presented him with a pair of cowboy boots, his prompt response was:

Not Drafted.

"Thank you. I'll need a pair of boots to wade through the mud the New Deal has created in the last seven years."

In combating the Roosevelt strategy of letting his aides do the campaigning, Mr. Willkie tells his audiences:

"I wasn't drafted. I'm fighting for this job, and I have serious doubts whether any one else was drafted."

A temporary scare was thrown into Mr. Willkie's campaign staff when he strained his vocal chords the second day out, after a strenuous series of outdoor speeches in Chicago and downstate Illinois. One throat specialist, Dr. Francis Lederer, was rushed by plane from Chicago and met the train Saturday evening. Dr. Ralph Barnard of Beverly Hills flew East and met the special train at Kansas City.

After giving his throat a complete rest Saturday night and Sunday, Mr. Willkie was going strong again Monday, with two big speeches at Coffeyville, Kans., and Tulsa, Okla. When he retired Saturday night, September 14, Mr. Willkie could barely whisper. Sunday morning he sauntered into the press car, smiling and assuring the correspondents there was nothing more seriously wrong with his voice than the effects of having made so many talks in Illinois. Some of the newsmen were still skeptical that the condition would clear so quickly, but Monday morning Mr. Willkie was making speeches again. He had adopted a distinctly different style of delivery, however, speaking in calmer tones instead of raising his voice for emphasis as he had been doing before. Instead of detracting from his effectiveness, he seemed to draw a better response from his audience with less effort.

Wendell Willkie speaking to a crowd of 15,000 persons who gathered to greet him upon his arrival at San Bernardino, Calif.
—Wide World Photo.

Twelve Cars In Political Caravan

Includes Historic Observation Car, 'The Pioneer'

Swing Around the Circle Was Initiated by Bryan in '96

By Bertram Benedict.

The first swing around the circle of Mr. Willkie comes considerably later than that of Gov. Landon in 1936. The Republican acceptance speech also was later this time—on August 17 in 1940, on July 23 in 1936. Gov. Landon got going on August 20, when he delivered several addresses on the way to his birthplace in West Middlesex, Pa.; he spoke also at Buffalo on his return.

At about this time of the year four years ago Gov. Landon was opening his second speaking campaign. This was confined to Maine and he did help to carry the State for the G. O. P. in the September elections. A third Landon tour in September was centered on the Middle West, as was a fourth in the first half of October. Gov. Landon then went to the Pacific Coast, speaking in the Southwest on his return. He ended the campaign in New York. It will be noted the South was omitted.

President Roosevelt, who now keeps in the news by inspecting defense posts, kept in the news early in the 1936 campaign by various visits—to Canada, to Chautauqua, N. Y.; to the Mount Rushmore (S. Dak.) memorial, to the Harvard Tercentenary celebration. The President's one campaign tour was confined to October; it ended in New York City.

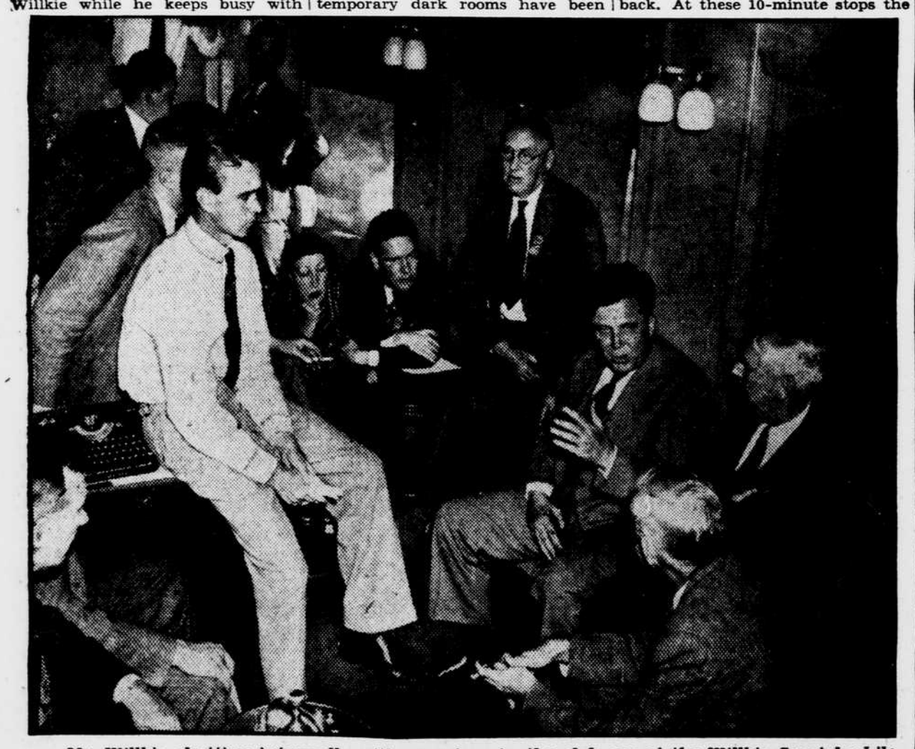
Although Horace Greeley in 1872 and James G. Blaine in 1884 had traveled around the country in their presidential campaign more than was customary, the modern swing around the circle was really initiated by William Jennings Bryan in 1896. Bryan spoke more often and covered more ground than any presidential candidate before or since. And he drew enormous audiences. But, as in the case of Alfred E. Smith in 1932, many came out of curiosity to see and hear a striking personality, not necessarily prepared to be convinced.

McKinley in 1896 and 1900, like Harding in 1920 and to some extent Coolidge in 1924, won by a "front porch" campaign. The strategy of saying little rests on a belief that speeches leave too many loopholes. President Roosevelt wishes now that he had not condemned deficits and unbalanced budgets in a 1932 campaign speech, and President Hoover in the same campaign sent forth a boomerang when he predicted that grass would grow in the streets if the Democratic tariff program were enacted.

In one of his dialogues with Hinnessey Mr. Dooley tells of the Boy Orator who was defeated for alderman. He complained to his victor, a taciturn old-timer: "I can't understand it; why, I made almost 1,500 speeches!" Replied the latter softly: "My majority was just about 1,500."

In 1932 President Hoover had planned to conduct a front-porch campaign, but in September Maine went Democratic, and Mr. Hoover took to the stump in October. He tried at first more or less to ignore his opponent, at least not to mention him by name. Gov. Roosevelt had broken precedent by going in person to the convention which nominated him and there accepting the nomination. On August 20, at Columbus, Ohio, he answered the Hoover acceptance address of August 11; in mid-September he opened a speaking campaign which continued until election day.

The Roosevelt technique in 1932 was to devote one speech and, in some detail, to one topic in a locality interested in that topic. In 1928 Gov. Smith spoke more often and covered more ground than Mr. Hoover. He believed that the end of the campaign told the story, and he discharged his heaviest artillery in the closing days; but the election was already in the bag.



Mr. Willkie chatting informally with reporters in the club car of the Willkie Special while on his speaking tour, headed for Los Angeles.
—Wide World Photo.

Crowds at the Chicago Stockyards listening to Wendell Willkie start his drive for the White House.
—Wide World Photo.